

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

A HEARTFELT THANKS

This is my final issue as editor-in-chief of *MIS Quarterly Executive*, and I'm delighted to announce that Carol Brown has agreed to take on this role. Carol has been a leader in blending strong academic rigor with practice-oriented relevance throughout her career. She has served *MISQE* as an author, editorial board member, and currently, as a senior editor (SE). As a former Academic VP of SIM, she has worked closely with SIM, our sponsor. Carol pioneered the idea of using the SIM Academic workshop to create a pipeline for an annual special issue of *MISQE*. She was the guest editor, with Christina Soh, of the first special issue in 2007. Please join me in congratulating Carol on her new role.

I am sorry to announce that this issue also marks Cynthia Beath's retirement as an *MISQE* senior editor. Cynthia joined the SE team before we solicited our first set of papers in 2000. Simply put, the journal never would have survived without her tireless efforts to thoroughly review and edit papers. Perhaps more importantly, she initiated a series of workshops at AMCIS to help authors who were trying to do practitioner-oriented research and write for *MISQE*. She has been a constant source of support and good ideas. We thank her for her huge contribution to *MISQE*.

As I complete my term, I'd like to take a moment to thank all those whose efforts have helped us realize the vision of an academic journal written for practitioners. These include:

- Allen Lee, who had the vision
- Jack Rockart, who brought the vision to life, as the first EIC
- Alan Dennis, our publisher, whose persistent efforts to find and manage needed resources have made this endeavor viable
- The SIM Executive Board, for its willingness to sponsor this journal in good times and bad
- Ray Hoving, who has been an invaluable ongoing liaison between the *MISQE* editorial board and SIM—the voice of reason as we tried to understand our readers' needs
- Past and present senior editors (Ritu Agarwal, Cynthia Beath, Carol Brown, Blake Ives, Mary Lacity, Allen Lee, Jack Rockart, Michael Vitale, Leslie Willcocks, and Bob Zmud), who have shaped the journal through their hard work and valuable guidance
- Barbara McNurlin and David Seabrook, who have taken the words of our authors and helped make them work for our readers
- Nick Lockwood and his predecessors in the role of managing editor (Aaron Curtis, Paul Clay, Kerry Ward, Michael Williams) for doing all the behind the scenes work
- Our Board of Editors for sharing their insights and expertise and for participating in our unique review system
- Our authors, who have taken the time to research and write on the issues IT executives are facing
- And you, our readers, who make it all worthwhile.

I apologize to the many people I've omitted. I assure you, it's been a delight to work with all of you.

This issue highlights the variety of issues that *MISQE* covers—and that IT executives are addressing. Erran Carmel, Guodong Gao, and Ning Zhang provide an overview of the Chinese outsourcing industry. They discuss three different kinds of companies occupying the market and the benefits and risks of offshore outsourcing with each of these groups. They also discuss the evolution of the Chinese outsourcing industry to help potential clients determine if and when they might want to seek services in China.

LeFave, Branch, Brown, and Wixom present a SIM award-winning case study on the Sprint Nextel merger. The firm's integration efforts resulted in higher-than-expected, faster-than-expected cost savings. The authors identify lessons learned for other firms facing integration efforts following the merger of firms with very different cultures and IT experiences.

The case study on Wal-Mart's RFID efforts, described by Hardgrave, Langford, Waller, and Miller, offers valuable insights on how firms can target benefits from

RFID. It also presents a model for how firms can test assumptions about the value of new technologies. The RFID pilot at Wal-Mart provided conclusive evidence of potential benefits. It did not resolve the challenge of implementing the new technology, which has been a long-term effort.

Rai, Sambamurthy, and Agarwal offer some lessons on governance for firms developing sourcing relationships. The authors describe three different governance modes. All three can lead to successful alliances between clients and their partners, but they offer different costs and benefits. The authors note that these relationships often evolve as the partners learn how to work effectively with each other and develop greater trust.

I hope you enjoy these articles. We value your feedback.

Jeanne W. Ross
Editor-in-Chief